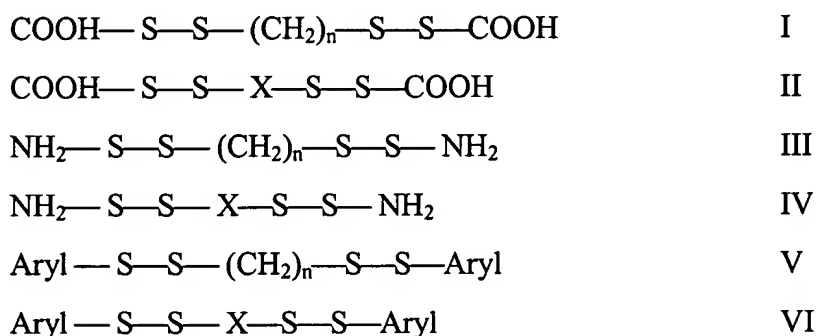


IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows.

1. (Cancelled)
2. (Original) A proteinoid microsphere comprising a mixture of amino acids that are thermally condensed and crosslinked with a crosslinker of any one of formulae I-VI.



wherein:

X is a spacer group of about approximately 3 to 100 angstroms by about 2 to 30 angstroms that comprises an alkane chain, an alkene chain, a cycloalkyl or aryl ring having five to fourteen carbon atoms, or a combination thereof;

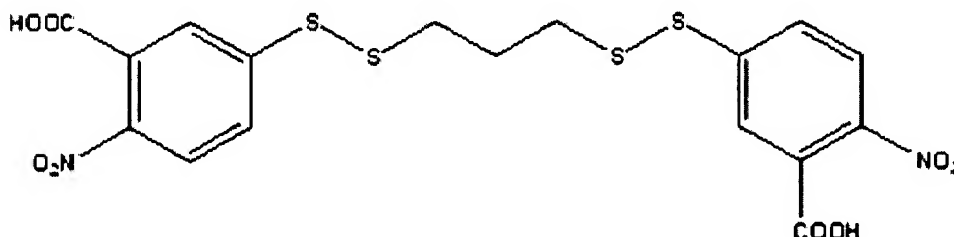
n is an integer ranging from 1 to 18;

S is a sulfur atom; and

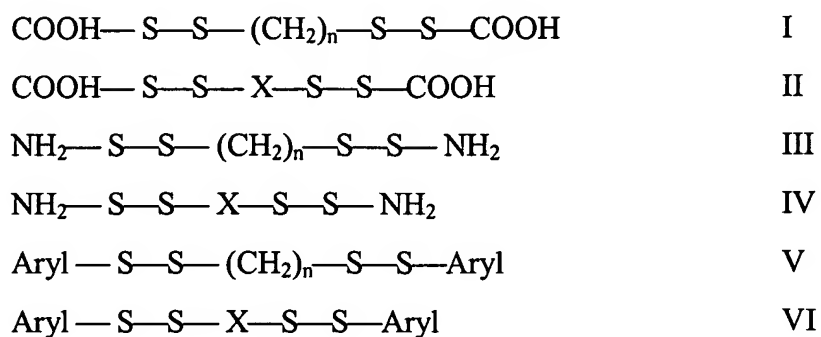
Aryl is a phenyl radical or an ortho-fused bicyclic radical having about nine to ten ring atoms wherein at least one ring is aromatic and wherein each Aryl moiety is substituted with at least one reactive group that can form a covalent linkage with an amino acid.

3. (Original) The proteinoid microsphere of Claim 2 wherein the reactive group that can form a covalent linkage with an amino acid is carboxylate, nitro, amino or sulfhydryl.

4. (Original) The proteinoid microsphere of Claim 2 wherein the reactive group that can form a covalent linkage with an amino acid is a carboxylate group.
5. (Original) A proteinoid microsphere comprising a mixture of amino acids that are thermally condensed and crosslinked with a crosslinker reagent of formula VII:



6. (Cancelled)
7. (Original) A therapeutic composition comprising a therapeutic agent encapsulated within a proteinoid microsphere that comprises a mixture of amino acids that are thermally condensed and crosslinked with a crosslinker of any one of formulae I-VI.



wherein:

X is a spacer group of about approximately 3 to 100 angstroms by about 2 to 30 angstroms that comprises an alkane chain, an alkene chain, a cycloalkyl or aryl ring having five to fourteen carbon atoms, or a combination thereof;

n is an integer ranging from 1 to 18;

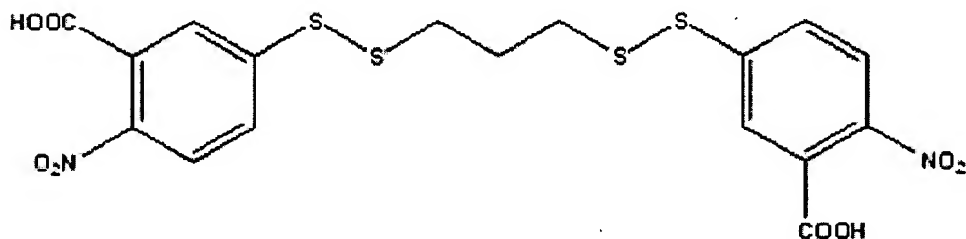
S is a sulfur atom; and

Aryl is a phenyl radical or an ortho-fused bicyclic radical having about nine to ten ring atoms wherein at least one ring is aromatic and wherein each Aryl moiety is substituted with at least one reactive group that can form a covalent linkage with an amino acid.

8. (Original) The therapeutic composition of Claim 7 wherein the reactive group that can form a covalent linkage with an amino acid is carboxylate, nitro, amino or sulfhydryl.

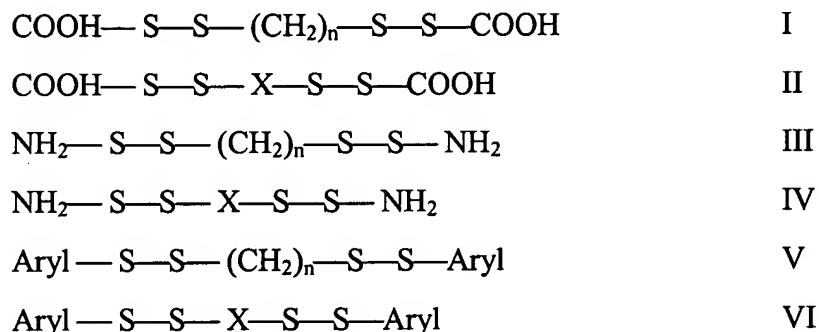
9. (Original) The therapeutic composition of Claim 7 wherein the reactive group that can form a covalent linkage with an amino acid is a carboxylate group.

10. (Original) A therapeutic composition comprising a therapeutic agent encapsulated within a mixture of amino acids that are thermally condensed and crosslinked with a crosslinker reagent of formula VII:



11. (Cancelled)

12. (Original) An article for wound treatment comprising a therapeutic agent encapsulated within a proteinoid microsphere that comprises a mixture of amino acids that are thermally condensed and crosslinked with a crosslinker of any one of the formulae I-VI.



wherein:

X is a spacer group of about approximately 3 to 100 angstroms by about 2 to 30 angstroms that comprises an alkane chain, an alkene chain, a cycloalkyl or aryl ring having five to fourteen carbon atoms, or a combination thereof;

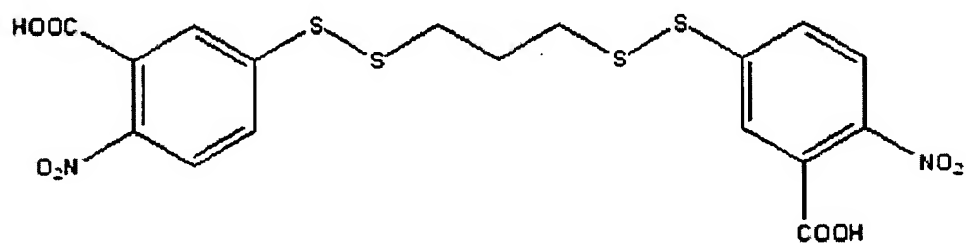
n is an integer ranging from 1 to 18;

S is a sulfur atom; and

Aryl is a phenyl radical or an ortho-fused bicyclic radical having about nine to ten ring atoms wherein at least one ring is aromatic and wherein each Aryl moiety is substituted with at least one reactive group that can form a covalent linkage with an amino acid.

13. (Original) The article of Claim 12 wherein the reactive group that can form a covalent linkage with an amino acid is carboxylate, nitro, amino or sulfhydryl.
14. (Original) The article of Claim 12 wherein the reactive group that can form a covalent linkage with an amino acid is a carboxylate group.

15. (Original) An article for wound treatment comprising a therapeutic agent encapsulated within a mixture of amino acids that are thermally condensed and crosslinked with a crosslinker reagent of formula VII:



16 - 27. (Cancelled)